

# Washington Economic Development Commission

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## Our Vision

*Make Washington State the most attractive, creative and fertile investment environment for innovation in the world as a means of achieving long-term global competitiveness, prosperity and economic opportunity for all the state's citizens.*

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## Why We Exist

The Washington Economic Development Commission is an independent, non-partisan commission charged by the legislature with the mission of creating a comprehensive statewide strategy to guide investments in economic development, infrastructure, workforce training, small business assistance, technology transfer and export assistance. The WEDC membership is comprised of business, labor, academic, associations and government leaders.

In carrying out this legislative mandate and related responsibilities the WEDC will:

*Provide leadership, guidance and direction to the Governor and legislature on a long-term and systematic approach to economic development.*

*Formulate a common set of outcomes and benchmarks for the economic development system as a whole and measure the states economic vitality.*

*Define public, private, and philanthropic sector roles and best practices ensuring Washington captures the next generation of technology investment and global market opportunities.*

*Provide a forum for geographic and industry cluster "institutions for collaboration" to build stronger partnerships.*

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## Foundations for a Strategy

The WEDC's initial strategy is based on the recommendations of the "**Next Washington**" and **Global Competitiveness Council** reports. The Global Competitiveness Council report introduces its strategy with a statement from Governor Christine Gregoire:

*"Washington is its own small nation in this new world economy and we are uniquely suited to succeed. We are innovative; we have the human capital, research institutions and the natural resources to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by global trade."*

Key elements:

**Ensure** that skills development and education are up to world-class standards;

**Stimulate** research and innovation at the levels needed to complete;

**A state-of-the art** infrastructure;

**An aggressive**, consistent marketing program;

**Maintain** a predictable and stable political environment.

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## We're innovating...

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The Next Washington reports asks: *"How can we stay ahead of the global transformation of the economy?"*  
Key elements:

**Education and Skills** as the most important investment—particularly early childhood education and lifelong learning;

**Foundation for Economic Success** consisting of traditional infrastructure investment as well as deliberate approaches to energy, telecommunications, water and transportation;

**Washington is Open for Business** by making the state even more business-friendly by making it easier and less expensive to operate a business in Washington.

In addition, reducing health care costs, achieving energy independence, global health and advanced manufacturing merit strategic attention and initiatives.

Realizing these outcomes in the context of accelerating technology, changing demographics and globalization will require an extraordinary level of public and private collaboration, adaptation and collective insight. The WEDC is uniquely positioned to play a constructive and credible role in moving this vision forward and shaping the innovation ecosystem of the next Washington. The WEDC has organized its strategy development in 4 Working Groups illustrated in the chart below:

The Working Groups are chartered to develop action recommendations for the full Commission's Economic Development Strategy for presentation to the Governor and State Legislature.

The Working Groups convene in special meetings. All meeting notices are sent to interested stakeholders via email prior to each meeting. Parties interested in receiving these notices should send requests to: [noreenh@cted.wa.gov](mailto:noreenh@cted.wa.gov)



## Washington Economic Development Commission

**Bruce Kendall, Chair,** Tacoma

Representing: Associate Development Organizations

**Steve Van Ausdle., Vice -Chair,** Walla Walla,

Representing: Community or Technical College

**Constance (Connie) Bacon,** Tacoma

Representing: Port Districts

**Rick Bender,** Seattle

Representing: Labor

**Tony Bonanzino,** Spokane

Representing: Private Sector

**John (Jack) Breese,** Mercer Island

Representing: Private Sector

**John Gardner, Ph.D.,** Seattle

Representing: Higher Education

**Sen. Jim Kastama,** Puyallup

Representing: WA Senate (Ex-officio)

**Rep. Phyllis Gutiérrez Kenney,** Seattle

Representing: WA House of Representatives  
(Ex-officio)

**Roger Knutzen,** Burlington

Representing: Private Sector

**Karen Lee,** Olympia

Representing: Employment Security  
(Ex-officio)

**Eleni Papadakis,** Olympia

Representing: Workforce Training and Education  
Coordinating Board (Ex-officio)

**H. Stewart Parker,** Seattle

Representing: Private Sector

**Rep. Norma Smith,** Coupeville

Representing: WA House of Representatives  
(Ex-officio)

**Mike Sotelo,** Seattle

Representing: Private Sector

**Ted Sprague,** Longview

Representing: Economic Development Councils

**Larry Williams,** Olympia

Representing: Community Trade and Economic  
Development (Ex-officio)

**Sen. Joseph Zarelli,** Ridgefield

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